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ABSTRACT

After a brief introduction to the historical background of the peace education movement in Australia, this paper surveys major events concerning peace education in Australia in the 1980s. Peace education efforts in Australia have experienced successes as well as setbacks, and that the fate of such efforts often is at least in part, related to national and local political forces. (DB)

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PEACE EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA: THE LEGACY OF THE 1980s

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It may be useful now to take stock of the situation of peace education in different parts of the world. What has happened in the past, what are the difficulties and possibilities as we see them at present, and what visions for the future development do we have? This paper is an important contribution to such a stock-taking process. Max Lawson and Frank Hutchinson (from University of New England in New South Wales) report on the development of peace education in Australia, noting the successes and setbacks partly related to political forces. An interesting example is the ambitious development in New South Wales of nine volumes on peace education (for example for different school subjects) on which an official embargo was later imposed. The authors note that the education for peace movement has taken root in Australia even though the crop is subject to marked seasonal variations.

Just as the peace movement in Australia has a relatively long history – dating at least from opposition to Australian involvement in the Second Boer War (1899-1902) (1) – similarly peace education in Australia has a long pre-history. Small independent progressive schools in the nineteen twenties and thirties often made ambitious attempts at introducing peace perspectives into the curriculum as did some of the more conventional and long established private schools. For example, St. Andrew's School (1921-1931) Kew, Victoria, founded by the Reverend John Lawson used all sorts of means to build a new social order: pageants, Esperanto lessons, addresses at assembly, debates on topics like "Conscription" and "Prisons" as well as letters of friendship to Indian schools. (2) Another Presbyterian minister, Reverend Dr. E. Neil McQueen as Principal of the Presbyterian Ladies' College, Croydon, New South Wales, introduced, for example, "representative sessions of the League Council and Assembly in classes whenever a special topic of world concern occurred" (3) and discussion of controversial contemporary events was one of the features of the school curriculum. (4)

After the Second World War, UNESCO held its very first seminar on the topic "Education for International Understanding" and Emeritus Professor W.F. Connell, formerly Head of the Department of Education, University of Sydney, recalled the heady excitement of that six weeks' seminar but despite all the enthusiasm and work of such organizations as UNESCO and the World Education Fellowship "all the work that has been done in Australia since 1947 appears to be futile" (5) claimed Professor Connell in his 1982 address, "Curriculum for Peace Education" to the World Education Fellowship. Whilst this is an echo in some ways of Robin Burns's observation in 1974 in the International Peace Research Newsletter that "the term 'peace education' is not used widely in Australia," (6) it may obscure the fact that in the non-formal educational sector some significant developments had been occurring. Among the important factors in the cultural preparation for the Australian peace education movement of the 1980s were the experiences of the anti-Vietnam war movement and the growth of grass roots, non-governmental organisations, such as Community Aid Abroad, concerned with improved relations with Asia. These years had witnessed the beginnings of an important reappraisal of Australia's relations with Asia after a long period of "Yellow Peril" xenophobia. (7) It was in this transitional context to a more multicultural society that Burns could comment on how many of the concepts and approaches taken by those active in the field of "development education" or "social justice education," as it was

sometimes called, were closely related to those of peace educators even if not using the actual name "peace education". (8) As secretary (1983-88) of the Peace Education Commission of the International Peace Research Association, Robin Burns from her Australian base (La Trobe University, Victoria) further explored the various dimensions of peace education, particularly in relation to development education.

Development education continues in Australia to be very closely related to peace education, particularly so as Australia is a "North" country in the "South" and South problems face Australia with a particular urgency. For example, Australia being the only "North" country with endangered tropical and sub-tropical rainforests faces similar economic pressures for maldevelopment as "South" countries. There is, too, the reality that sections of Australia's Aboriginal populations have life expectancies, similar to those, say, of Bangladesh. From the beginnings of the "new" peace education movement in Australia in the 1980's it was strongly emphasized that there was "No Peace Without Development," to use a phrase from the title of an influential paper (9) by Swee-Hin Toh (University of New England) who has jointly with Robin Burns further extended the connection of peace education in Australia with wider activites, such as the work of Australian development aid agencies. (10)

By an act of synchronicity, peace education in Australia had its first conference in 1981, with initial stirring at the end of the seventies, paralleling the revival of peace education in England, (11) but at this stage with little or no direct influence from England.

The 1981 (3rd-4th October) conference in Australia held at a private progressive school, the Australian International Independent School, North Ryde, Sydney, attracted some two hundred people and right from the beginning of the movement the older tradition of "education for international understanding" of the World Education Fellowship (formerly New Education Fellowship) blended with the more specific, social justice or structural peace concerns of development education. Although it is a contentious point, in the Australian context development education often loomed larger than disarmament or nuclear issues. This is not to underestimate the significance of American bases in Australia or Australia as a large exporter of uranium, which are matters of deep concern within the peace movement in Australia, but peace education in Australia was often written up by its critics as simply being concerned with nuclear disarmament issues.

The Sydney 1981 conference was jointly sponsored by the AIIS school

(the conference convenor Jenny Burnley being a teacher of Global Studies at the school) and the United Nations Association of Australia (NSW branch). Each speaker at the conference was invited to explore methods of teaching about the non violent resolution of conflict. (12)

The conflict resolution component of peace education in Australia has greatly benefited from the enormous success of the Conflict Resolution Network which was initiated by the United Nations Association of Australia (NSW branch) as a contribution to the International Year of Peace (1986). The Co-convenors were Stella Cornelius, Convenor of the Association's Peace Program and Keith Suter UNAA Past President and prolific writer on peace issues. From modest beginnings, a nucleus of thirty workers (but including the indefatigable mother and daughter team of Stella and Helena Cornelius), by 1990 the network comprised "10,000 thoughtful citizens who are changing the world". (13)

Stella Cornelius, who received the Order of Australia for her outstanding contributions to peace making was appointed National Director of the International Year of Peace program and Prime Minister Bob Hawke paid tribute to Mrs Cornelius's "tireless energy and dedicated work for the objectives of the IYP and to the members of the various committees who gave so freely of their time and energy to make the program a success". (14)

The International Year of Peace in Australia was indeed a success, particularly so when compared with the nominal efforts of some other Western countries such as Britain (15) although some commentators saw the Australian Labor government's enthusiasm for the International Year of Peace as opportunistic given the vote catching emphasis of peace issues at the time – some Labor party stalwarts changing votes to one of two small parties, the Nuclear Disarmament Party or the Australian Democrats, for both of whom peace was a central platform. (16)

Even if the motives of the federal Labor government were mixed, it nevertheless provided $A3.15 million dollars for the International Year of Peace and some state governments such as that of Victoria, also made generous provision and each state had its own IYP committee with members drawn from a broad range of community organizations, from peace groups to returned veterans associations. Many of the projects initiated during the International Year of Peace had long lasting effects and greatly stimulated the peace education movement in Australia. Indeed on the very day in 1986 which saw the formation of the Conflict Resolution Network some participants came from a morning meeting which formed the Australian Association for Peace, Justice and Development Education

(AAPJADE). (17)

The nucleus of this National Peace Education Association was closely connected to the Peace Studies Curriculum Group which was formed in November 1981 as a follow up from the successful conference of the month before convened by Jenny Burnley. The Australian International Independent School (where Burnley continued to teach) became the home of the Peace Studies Curriculum Group which since 1981 published high quality practical resources and held in service courses for teachers both in New South Wales and nationally. This group published in 1984 *Peace Education: Approaches and Resources* which reached a third edition and drew a warm response from classroom teachers. (18) Such materials were underpinned by a concern to reduce the disillusion that many young people felt about the future, and to develop social literacy skills in peacemaking.

Teachers' unions throughout Australia strongly support peace education. For example, in the International Year of Peace, the NSW Teachers Federation produced a widely distributed 87 paged resource folder, *Education For Peace*. In the independent school union sector a large successful national conference was held in Brisbane in 1984, particularly so, as many of the conference attenders taught in Australia's establishment private schools.

Partly because of the large geographical distances between capitals, such national conferences have been particularly important in Australia to bring together peace educators from the various states. At the 1986 national conference held at Sydney Teachers College (within Sydney University grounds) another step forward was taken. It led to the founding of a single organization, the Australian Peace Education and Research Association (APERA), with the merger of the AAPJADE and the Australian Peace Studies and Research Association (APSARA). While by no means suggesting that peace research and peace education are now part of a seamless garment in Australia, the joining together of forces has been mutually beneficial.

At these various state and national conferences a considerable number of overseas peace educators/activists have come to Australia often on quite a regular basis. The list includes Adam Curle, Elise Boulding, Joanna Macy, Fran Peavey, and David Hicks.

David Hicks recorded his impressions in *Peace Education: The Australian Connexion* which arose out of a lecture tour to Australia in March-April, 1984. From 1981 to 1989 Dr Hicks was Director of the Centre for Peace Studies at St Martin's College Lancaster and the materials from his centre are widely appreciated in Australia. In the space of a few weeks David

Hicks gave some fifty workshops, lectures and meetings throughout the country observing "it was very interesting in Australia to experience a different emphasis on peace issues. Some of the debates in Britain: cruise missiles, American bases, seemed remote, others still very close at hand". (19)

What David Hicks did notice that Australia and Britain had in common in peace education is well illustrated by the following anecdote:

> "It was in Hobart (Tasmania) that a teacher from a small rural high school asked 'Who is organizing this interest in Peace Education?' My answer had to be 'No one'. I told him that my impression of Australia was the same as in Britain, ie that teachers, as other concerned human beings, were increasingly asking themselves what they should be doing about peace in School. This concern in both countries is a powerful grass roots one." (20)

Although to this day peace education in Australia is a grass-roots movement shown by the wide-cross section of community involvement in the Australian Peace Education and Research Association which is by no means limited to teachers and academics, some writers in Australia choose to see peace studies/education in this country not as grass-roots movement but as a carefully orchestrated "top down movement", "Soviet inspired and even co-ordinated" (21) as claimed by the anonymous author "a former government intelligence analyst with a special interest in political terrorism and subversion" who produced the book length study *Operation Peace Studies* in 1985 which received widespread press coverage.

Much of the passion and rhetoric concerning the peace movement in Australia in the eighties was no doubt a continuing fall-out from the bitterness and controversy surrounding the rights or wrongs of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war during the nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies, just as many teachers interest in peace issues sprang from that troubled period in Australian life.

An organization concerned with healing the wounds of war and violence, Interhelp, arranged for visits of Joanna Macy to Australia where her Despair and Empowerment workshops created a great impact and were attended by many teachers as well as other members of the community, particularly in the helping professions.

The Australian Interhelp network began in Lismore in northern New South Wales and a group of like minded friends not only organized Joanna Macy's first visit but a follow up tour was made in 1986 by another US Interhelper, Tova Green. Arising from these annual Interhelp conferences,

three very successful Heart Politics conferences have been held. The name comes from Fran Peavey another US Interhelper and her book *Heart Politics*. Fran Peavey has been a speaker at all three conferences.

Joanna Macy's visits to the lovely rainforest areas of northern New South Wales (close to Lismore) led to her collaboration with Australian rainforest preservation activist, John Seed, together with Anne Naess and Pat Fleming to produce a sequel to Macy's *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age* called *Thinking Like A Mountain – Toward a Council of All Being* which is an Australian inspired contribution to the peace and ecology movement.

The United Nations Association first brought Adam Curle to Australia and this visiting continued under the auspices of the Conflict Resolution Network. As foundation Professor of Peace Studies at Bradford (UK) Adam Curle's writings on peace, partly because of his visits to Australia are widely known here as are the writings of fellow Quaker, Elsie Boulding whose visits to Australia have also been a continuing source of inspiration.

It was the visit of Barbara Wein to Australia, sponsored by the Federal Government as a consultant to the International Year of Peace Committee which inspired a group to develop a curriculum guide and similar in scope to Wein's own *Peace and World Order Studies: A Curriculum Guide*, giving an overview of peace education in Australia and New Zealand, published as *Peace Studies in Australia and New Zealand*. (22)

As might be expected the introduction of Peace Studies and Peace Education courses at University level was not thought to be easy but the first temporary set back was a most unusual case. At the University of New England (Armidale, New South Wales) Dr Bernard Swan's proposed course in 1982, the first of its kind in Australia, "Geography of Peace and Conflict" was knocked back by the Academic Board of the University of New England by a vote of 21 to 19 influenced by a speech of the Vice-Chancellor who at the time was also Australian Commissioner for UNESCO. The gist of the Vice-Chancellor's disapproval of Peace Studies was that it was inter-disciplinary and not objective. (23)

Gradually a more favourable climate prevailed and the University of New England was the first Australian university to have a major in Peace Studies (up to 8 units out of 18 for a Bachelor of Arts degree) and a Master of Literature (Peace Studies) degree with the latter having 34 enrolments for 1992. The University of Queensland (where Dr Ralph Summy has been tirelessly active as his course described in the above mentioned Wein directory can testify) (24) now has a comprehensive peace studies program.

Macquarie University, beginning in 1984 pioneered a multi-faculty Peace Studies course and also at Macquarie Dr Greg Tillett has introduced thriving courses in conflict resolution including a post-graduate diploma. (25) Other New South Wales universities such as the University of Sydney and the University of Wollongong also have offerings in peace studies as do, for example, Victorian universities, Monash and Deakin.

While the development of teaching peace studies and peace education in Australian universities has not been without its problems, as well as receiving a great deal of heartening support and co-operation from colleagues, the path of peace education at primary and secondary level in Australian schools has been much more subject to the volatile nature of state politics in Australia whereas the Universities are mainly a Federal preserve. The different cases of Victoria and New South Wales with regard to peace education may be used as illustrations.

During the International Year of Peace the Victorian Labor government set up a Peace Education Task Force. An extensive report was written and a recommendation made that a Peace Education Resource Centre be set up. A brief version of the report was circulated to all Government schools in Victoria and the Premier, John Cain implemented the recommendations of the report. (26) The Peace Education Resource Centre is still active and as well as enthusiasm in the state sector, the Catholic archdiocese of Melbourne has endorsed an excellent series of peace education materials for use in the Church's schools.

Peace education in New South Wales had a promising start. (27) By the end of 1987 and greatly heartened by support from the federal Curriculum Development Centre and the NSW Committee of the International Year of Peace an enormous amount of co-operative energy and work by experienced teachers produced a wide range of materials on peace education. This project, under the direction of Frank Hutchinson, produced no less than nine volumes of materials on peace education themes designed to be as practical as possible – each volume was between 150 and 200 pages in length. Titles in the series included: "Education for Peace in the Primary School"; "Education for Peace in Geography"; "Education for Peace in History"; "Education for Peace in Asian Social Studies". Throughout these volumes, the approach to peace was cross-cultural and holistic with particular emphasis given to the importance of non-violent ends and means.

The fate of "Education for Peace in the Primary School" is instructive. The current Liberal New South Wales Minister for Education claimed in 1991 that the initial print run of 6,000 copies had been "lost". (28) In the

intervening four years much had happened – in a closely contested election, the Labor Party lost office and currently the Liberals are governing relying on the support of some independent candidates. As far as the Ministry of Education portfolio is concerned the period has been marked by much unrest and has drawn much protest from teachers and their unions. A new Minister of Education, Virginia Chadwick, has been less confrontational than her predecessor and has admitted that a peace perspective is a "legitimate" one within existing subject areas but there is still an official embargo on the curriculum support materials in peace education, although a copy of each peace education book has been issued to writing teams, preparing curriculum statements on new "key learning areas" to make use of them as they wish.

The nine volumes of peace education, however, continue to have a subterranean life of their own: copies have turned up in many teacher education institutions and 'pirate' editions of the materials are being used and adapted in various contexts. Ironically, one month after the State Education for Peace Project closed in New South Wales, its Catholic Victorian counterpart brought out its important series of curriculum support materials.

Other states had their successes and setbacks: the Freemantle Education Centre in Western Australia did extensive peace education work under IYP auspices and Vanessa Letham's edited volume *Education for Peace, Justice and Hope* (29) published by the Centre was an excellent model for future works on peace education in Australia which were not long forthcoming. In South Australia, the Red Cross produced a case-study based conflict resolution manual, *Understanding Conflict* only to be withdrawn under pressure but continued to be sold under other agencies. The South Australian Department of Education also produced a teachers' manual titled *Beyond Fight or Flight* that was quite widely trialled in primary and secondary schools. In Tasmania, as might be expected, the long established Quaker school, the Friends School, Hobart, took the lead in peace education under its Co-principal, Margaret Bailey. (30)

Although peace education in Queensland in the 1980's developed in the face of much opposition, peace educators such as John Fien and Drew Hutton not only provided much stimulating writing on peace education but marked organizational ability as shown in the 1984 David Hicks tour. Queensland was the venue for the 1986 Australian Geography Teachers' national peace education conference, "Teaching Geography for a Better World" with a return visit of David Hicks as a keynote speaker. Although

Queensland has born the brunt of much of the attacks on peace education, the 1991 Australian Peace Education and Research Association conference was held in Brisbane, which was very well attended, with Johan Galtung, on one of his return visits to Australia as a main speaker.

Peace has always been controversial. Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury (1931-1963) in 1950 addressed very large crowds during a visit of two tumultuous weeks to Australia on behalf of the Australian peace movement. He recalled one attack while departing from his Sydney hotel: "A very little man went down in the lift with me as I departed. He said in an extremely timid voice: 'I am so very glad you are leaving our city'. I was amused and nearly patted him on the shoulder for his courage". (31)

There are many with not so timid voices who want to see the departure of peace education and peace studies from Australian institutions but the education for peace movement has taken root in Australia even though the crop is subject to marked seasonal variations. The challenge for the 1990's is to both sustain and cross-fertilize what has taken root so as to open further dialogue on peaceful, equitable and ecologically sustainable futures. (32)

NOTES

1 Saunders, M. & Summy, R. *The Australian peace movement: A short history* (Canberra: Centre for Peace Research, Australian National University, 1986).

2 Peterson, R.C. "Australian progressive schools. II. Heirs of Homer Lane", *The Australian Journal of Education*, 1970, *14*(1), p. 8.

3 Sherington, G. "The headmasters – E.N. McQueen, L.C. Robson and J.R. Darling" in Turney, C. (Ed.) *Pioneers of Australian education*, Volume 3 (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1983), p. 173.

4 McQueen, E. N. *The Golden Key or educating for life* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1930), pp. 107-119.

5 Connell, W.F. *Curriculum for peace education* (Sydney: World Education Fellowship, 1982), p. 4.

6 Burns, R. "Peace education in Australia." *International Peace Research Newsletter*, 1974, *12*(3&4), p. 25. See, for example, Hutchinson, F. "A rationale for education for international understanding" (unpublished M.Ed. dissertation, University of New South Wales, 1973) for an early attempt to combine the traditional concerns of the World Education Fellowship with curriculum perspectives on "the third world and problems of development".

7 Hutchinson, F. "Australian policies and attitudes toward China, 1937-48", unpublished MA (Hons) thesis, Macquarie University, 1978, passim.

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8 Burns, op. cit., p. 25.
9 Toh, S.H. "No peace without development" in Letham, V. (Ed.) *Educating for peace, justice and hope* (Freemantle: Freemantle Education Centre, 1986), Section 1.3.
10 Toh, S.H. & Burns, R. "Education for peace: The Australian experience". *Convergence*, 1989, *22*(1), p. 62.
11 Ibid.
12 Fox, C. "Critical reflections on a passion for peace" in Toh, S.H. *Journeys in peace education*, op. cit., p. 90.
13 *The Conflict Resolution Network News*, Volume 16, July 1990, p. 1.
14 Hawke, Hon. R.J.L. *The International Year of Peace – Australia's contribution*, An address to Parliament by the Prime Minister, 28th November 1986, p. 10.
15 Hicks, D.W. *The Centre for Peace Studies 1980-9* (Lancaster: Centre for Peace Studies, 1989), p. 15.
16 Pettman, J. "The fight against peace". *Canberra Survey*, 1986, *39*(6), unpaginated.
17 Interview with Frank Hutchinson, formerly NSW Department of Education Peace Education consultant.
18 The Peace Studies Curriculum Group had earlier produced *Peace education in NSW schools* (Sydney: State Development Committee, 1983).
19 Hick, D. *Peace education: The Australian connexion* (Lancaster: Centre for Peace Studies, 1984), p. 10.
20 Ibid., p. 18.
21 Dr. Toh makes this point in his detailed analysis in Toh, S.H. "Neoconservatives and controversies in Australian peace education: Some critical reflections and a counter strategy" in Alger, C. & Stohl, M. (Eds.) *A just peace through transformation* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1988), pp. 211-232.
22 Bretherton, D. et al. *Peace studies in Australia and New Zealand* (Melbourne: Victorian Association of Peace Studies, 1989).
23 Interview with Dr. Bernard Swan, Senior Lecturer in Geography, University of New England.
24 Wein, B. (Ed.) *Peace and world order studies: A curriculum guide* (4th edition) (New York: World Policy Institute, 1983), pp. 69-79.
25 Simpson, G.L. "Peace studies at Macquarie University – Prospect" and Simpson, G.L. "Peace studies at Macquarie – Retrospect" in *Curriculum Perspectives*, 1985, *5*(2), pp. 73-75.
26 Bretherton, D. "A Rainbow Journal" in Toh, S.H. *Journeys in peace education*, (New York: Earth /Education, Action and Research Towards Holism/, 1991), p. 24.
27 See Heffernan, C., Lacey, R. & Hutchinson, F. *Education for peace: Explorations and proposals* (Canberra: Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1986) and Hutchinson, F. "Educating for a peaceful, sustainable future: An Australian perspective". *WCCI Forum*, 1988, *11*(2), pp. 99-109.

28 *Education* (Journal of the NSW Teachers' Federation), June 24, 1991 ("Peace supplement").

29 Letham, V. *Educating for peace, justice and hope* (Freemantle: Freemantle Education Centre, 1986).

30 Bailey, M. "Education for peace: A vision for the future", in Toh, S.H. *Journeys in peace education*; op. cit., pp. 4-6.

31 Johnson, H. *Searching for light: An autobiography* (London: Michael Joseph, 1968), p. 278.

32 One constructive example of how this challenge is being addressed is the recent establishment of the Global Education Project under the auspices of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid. It takes forward many of the lessons of the Australian peace education movement of the 1980s with its willingness to facilitate dialogue and co-operation among peace educators, development educators and environmental educators.

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At present "Peace Education Miniprints" will also function as aids in the networking activities of PEC/IPRA (the Peace Education Commission of the International Peace Research Association).

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